

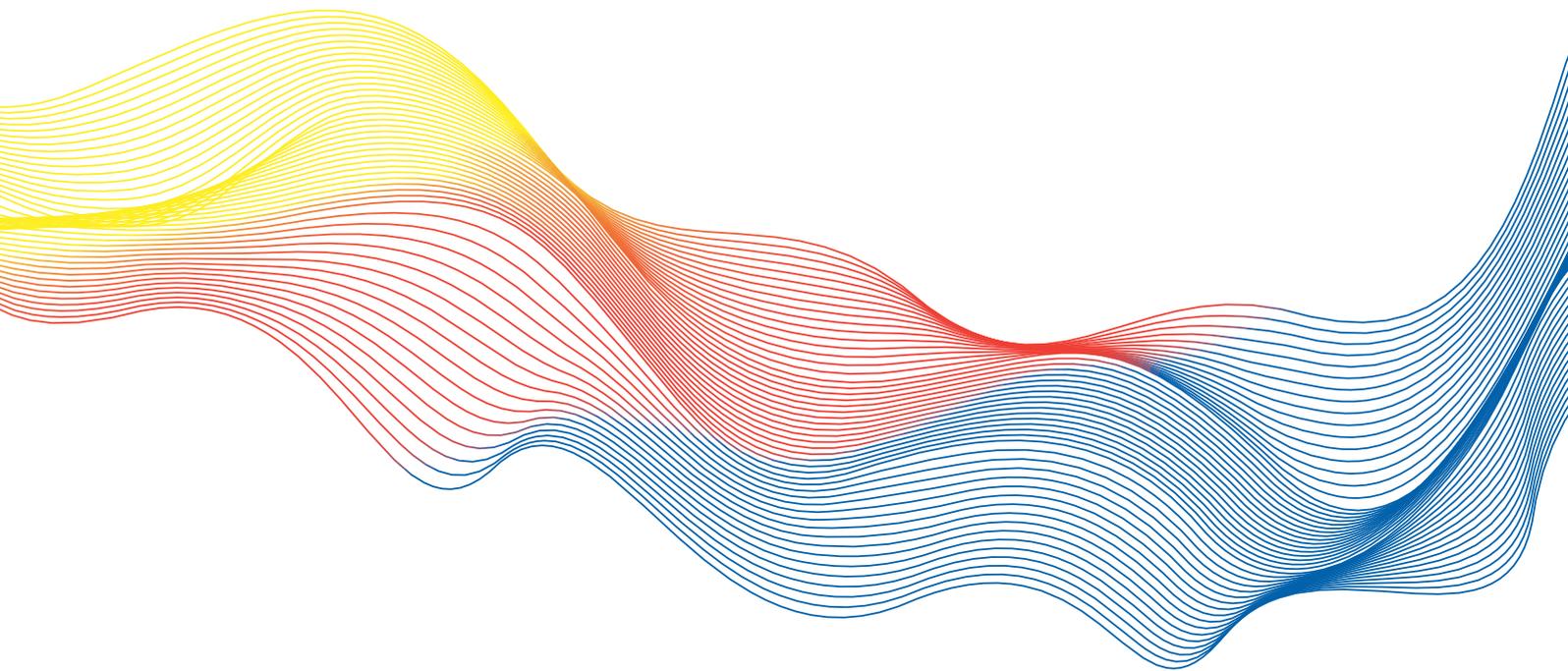


Realizing the Rights of Every Child in ASEAN 10 Recommendations



ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTHEAST
ASIAN NATIONS

unicef 
for every child



REALIZING THE RIGHTS OF EVERY CHILD IN ASEAN

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

In commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ASEAN and its member States have joined with UNICEF to highlight 10 ways to consider how child rights across the region can be met. In the scope of ASEAN Vision 2025, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal agenda and with an eye on how challenges for children and their rights might evolve over the next 30 years, the 10 recommendations serve to accelerate efforts within and across the region to ensure the rights of all children as enshrined in the CRC and its Optional Protocols are provided.



1. Reinforce regional systems and cross-border collaboration

- 1.1 ASEAN should continue to reinforce regional systems and cross-border collaboration to realize children's rights, for example, in the protection of children from trafficking, forced/arranged child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting; by supporting the rights of children affected by migration and displacement; and through regional responses to the climate crisis and disaster events. This includes strengthening collaboration and partnerships with civil society to expand opportunities for children.
- 1.2 ASEAN should continue to work closely with UNICEF and other United Nations and intergovernmental bodies to; pursue regional instruments, to develop and/or reinforce policy and to co-design planning documents that promote implementation of member States' international child rights commitments
- 1.3 Recognizing that the private sector is playing an increasingly active role in development, ASEAN member States are encouraged to strengthen their collaboration with and leverage the power of private sector partners to improve the lives of children in the region, harnessing their core businesses and innovation while safeguarding against possible conflicts of interest.



2. Leave no child behind

- 2.1 ASEAN member States should address the fulfilment of the rights of all children and pay attention to groups who are systematically excluded. These include children from extremely poor households, remote rural areas, urban informal settlements, ethno-linguistic minority groups, indigenous peoples, unaccompanied or separated children, migrants, refugees, undocumented and stateless populations, children with disabilities, LGBTI children and those affected and/or prone to humanitarian situations.
- 2.2 To ensure that no children are left behind, ASEAN member States should accelerate efforts to remove barriers that hinder equity, inclusion and quality across all child rights sectors by generating data and evidence to address causes of exclusion, utilizing evidence as well as mobilizing political will, partnership and resources with civil society and the private sector.
- 2.3 Disparities in access to quality services remain a problem and place millions of children in poorer conditions than their counterparts. There is a need to conduct budget analyses and develop costed policies and implementation plans to address disparities.



3. Achieve gender equality

- 3.1 ASEAN member States are encouraged to undertake a robust gender analysis in their plans of action and implement gender-responsive laws and policies as part of its commitment to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls as enshrined in ASEAN Vision 2025.

- 3.2 In order for policies, action plans and commitments related to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls to be operationalized, ASEAN member States are encouraged to ensure clear costing, budgeting, and allocation of funds as well as undertake assessments of impact of the investments.
- 3.3 As already committed in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Women and ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Children, ASEAN member States are encouraged to actively work to eliminate all prejudices and practices based on gender stereotypes roles for men and women, girls and boys including opportunities for redistribution of unpaid care work; access to resources and decision-making; rights to sexual and reproductive health and bodily integrity, and; positive representation in mass and social media.
- 3.4 ASEAN member States should continue to prevent all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation against women and girls and children from diverse gender identities including strengthening national systems for protection, prevention, monitoring and response; building capacity to facilitate quality and respectful social welfare, judicial and other support services; and fostering an enabling environment for the participation of women and children, including victims/survivors of violence, in the response and prevention efforts as committed to in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Women and ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Children.



4. Ensure increased equal access to quality services

- 4.1 ASEAN member States should continue to develop and implement risk-informed multisectoral plans of action to ensure equal access to quality services. Access to services has increased dramatically over the last 30 years, but severe disparities remain in terms of quality of the services provided.
- 4.2 To ensure increased coverage of quality services for all children, ASEAN member States should continue to strengthen the health, food, education, WASH, child protection, social welfare and social protection systems in all domains such as human resource capacities, financing, information management, governance and legislation, and service delivery and supplies. This should also include the mainstreaming of cross-cutting areas such as nutrition and early childhood development in all applicable systems. Removing systemic and non-systemic barriers that hinder equity, inclusion and quality at all levels by utilizing evidence and mobilizing political support, partnership and adequate resourcing is critical.
- 4.3 Inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration for children, including systems for children and multisectoral strategies for ending violence against children, improving nutrition and promoting responsive caregiving, should continue to be strengthened and adequately resourced.



5. Strengthen and implement laws and policies

- 5.1 To meet their international obligations, ASEAN member States are encouraged to close legislative gaps by strengthening legal frameworks across all sectors, including, for example, by: to prevent all forms of violence against children in all settings, by securing gender-sensitive employment laws that support breastfeeding practices and child care; to prevent harmful traditional practices; through mandating that a proportion of budgets be invested in child/social sectors; legislating for universal health coverage with better WASH services in healthcare facilities; revising WASH standards, taking into account gender and disability concerns for schools, households, healthcare centres and work places; mandating school policies on food, nutrition, health and WASH; by adopting taxes on unhealthy products such as sugar-sweetened beverages, tobacco and alcohol; and regulating in relation to harmful practices against children such as advertising of breastmilk substitutes, unhealthy foods and beverages, tobacco and alcohol and ensuring front-pack warning labels.
- 5.2 ASEAN member States are encouraged to promote legislative and policy frameworks for child rights, including mechanisms to fully implement and enforce international laws protecting children's rights. ASEAN member States are encouraged to consider withdrawing any reservations or declarations in relation to the CRC and its optional protocols.



6. Leverage innovation and technology

- 6.1. The new technological landscape is changing the way that children, young people and adults connect. ASEAN member States should explore how best to use technology to promote actions that support children's rights, for example by developing applications for birth registration, awareness raising campaigns over social media, or delivering vaccines through drones.
- 6.2 When engaging with the community through technology, it is important for ASEAN member States to recall that many poorer people do not have access to new technologies, and allowances for this must be made, both in terms of assisting all groups to access new technologies and in ensuring that the lack of access does not exacerbate disparities.
- 6.3 Climate smart technology should be developed in order to address the climate crisis, while new technologies and industries should develop in ways that will not contribute to the crisis, will reduce the risks faced by the most vulnerable families and provide innovative solutions during humanitarian emergencies.
- 6.4 ASEAN member States are encouraged to address the gender digital divide as well as create child-friendly online content and access to information, including sexual and reproductive health information.
- 6.5 ASEAN member States should be cognisant of the degree to which technology companies are collecting and using data related to children. It is important for member States to ensure that all children's rights contained in the CRC are given equal weight and balanced in the online world as well as offline. This entails protecting them from harm, while also ensuring that their rights to privacy, access to information, participation and association and freedom of expression are not violated by either the State or the private sector.



7. Sustainable social and behaviour change

- 7.1 Addressing social norms that act as barriers to children's rights has been essential to ASEAN member States' efforts to implement the CRC over the past 30 years and will determine their success in achieving the SDGs over the next decade. This requires engagement with children, young people and communities through multiple channels, including mass and social media, interpersonal communication, traditional and religious channels, community organizations and many others, to promote positive practices and social and behaviour change alongside the strengthening of laws and policies. This includes social norms relating to gender, as well as to other vulnerable groups, including children from extremely poor households, remote rural areas, urban informal settlements, ethno-linguistic minority groups, indigenous peoples, unaccompanied or separated children, migrants, refugees, undocumented and stateless populations, children with disabilities, LGBTI children and those affected and/or prone to humanitarian situations.
- 7.2 ASEAN member States should promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people to express themselves, creating opportunities for young people to be responsible and engage governments with creative ideas and solutions in defining and designing policies on issues that are relevant for them as well as with opportunities that enhance their rights.
- 7.3 ASEAN member States should continue to advance community engagement, which can lead to social mobilization and empowerment of the community and enhance social accountability. This includes using community engagement to encourage communities throughout the region to reach full open defecation free status.
- 7.4 In order to ensure that children survive and thrive during childhood, ASEAN member States should promote integrated approaches to positive parenting and child rights across the life cycle, including supporting families' ability to respond to children's developmental needs and building awareness that violence against children is no longer a 'private matter' or an acceptable form of discipline.



8. Increase public financial resourcing/social investment

- 8.1 There is no evidence that the region's economic growth generated equal growth in social investment for children. ASEAN member States are urged to reiterate their commitment to increase social

investment, which is necessary to help alleviate child poverty and address the persisting challenge of multiple child deprivations. Moreover, the commitment to increasing investment in children will help support continued and future economic growth and progress towards implementation of the CRC and achievement of the SDG targets.

- 8.2 ASEAN member States should make publicly available detailed information on the effective mobilization of public resources for children.
- 8.3 Investment in children should be efficient and transparent and follow the principles of equitable resource allocation and accountability.
- 8.4 The strength of inter-ASEAN and United Nations-ASEAN collaboration provides ongoing opportunities to develop sustainable finance plans for the achievement of the SDGs, focusing on an equity-based approach to uphold the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.



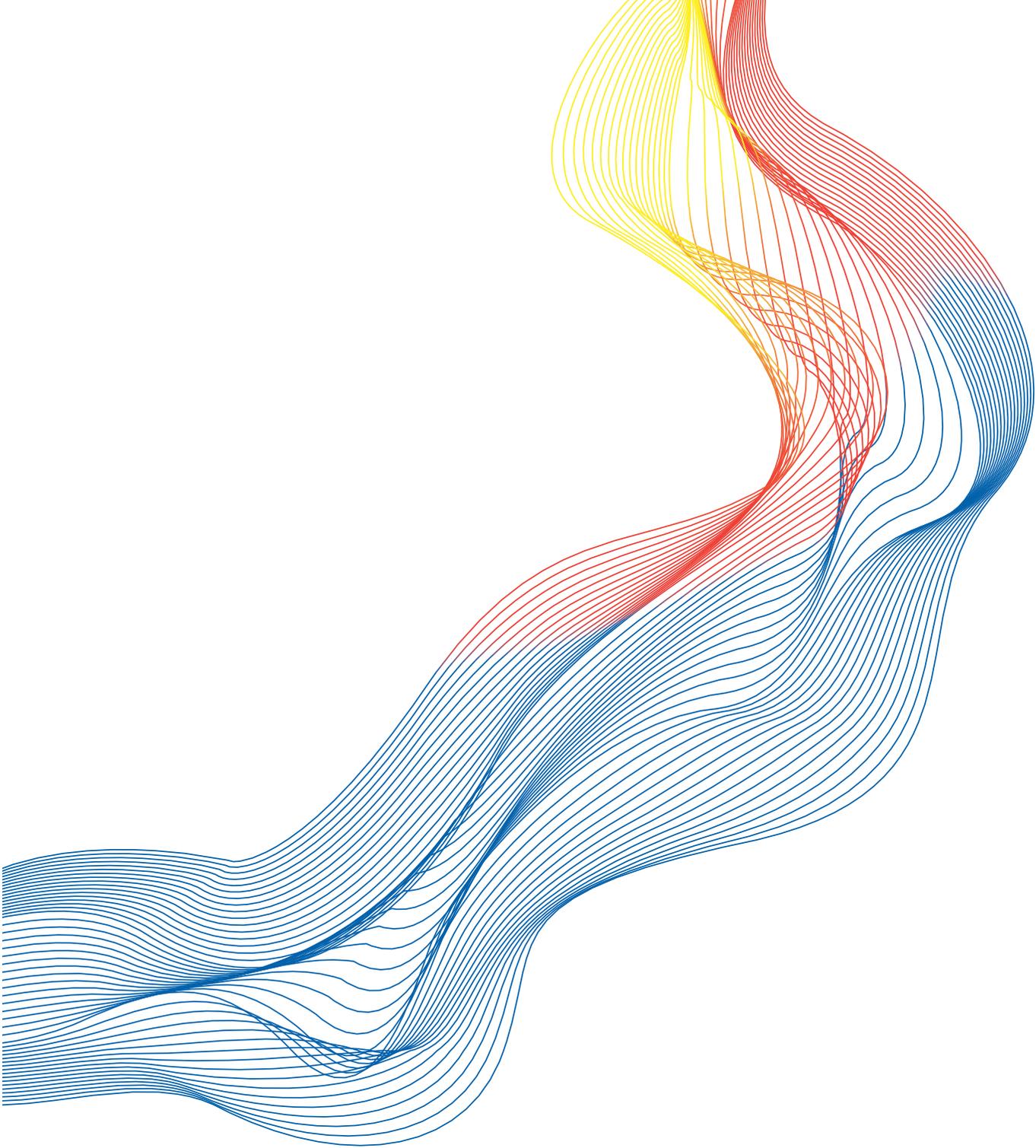
9. Strengthen data collection, analysis and use

- 9.1 Given the data gaps, particularly around disaggregated data, ASEAN member States are urged to strengthen data systems across all child rights sectors to strengthen monitoring. Investments are required for capacity building to collect, process, analyse, disseminate and use quality data. This includes, for example, improving the collection of data on the prevalence of violence against children, ensuring availability of sex-disaggregated data and improving the measurement of learning outcomes and the use of data on learning. It also includes data used in early warning systems for early actions and for children facing disaster risks. All data initiatives should ensure confidentiality and protection of individual child data, as well as national strengthening laws and policies for data handling and sharing.
- 9.2 ASEAN member States are encouraged to continue engaging in research across all child rights sectors to support greater understanding of needs and progress, and ASEAN is encouraged to support the documentation and sharing of lessons learned to inform policy reform and system-building efforts.
- 9.3 ASEAN member States are encouraged to improve measurement of outcomes and the use of data, including for monitoring and evaluation, to help fulfil children's rights across all sectors. This includes environmental and child health data, to help member States realize children's rights to a safe and healthy environment.
- 9.4 ASEAN member States and the Association are encouraged to continue their work to support the institutionalization of learning assessment systems such as the SEA-PLM, and the improvement and better use of education management information systems.



10. Accelerate child-sensitive climate actions

- 10.1 ASEAN member States are encouraged to accelerate climate actions to effectively address the effects of climate change and environmental hazards on children in the region, including global warming, transboundary pollution, limited safe water supply, biodiversity loss, chemicals and waste, and coastal environmental degradation.
- 10.2 ASEAN member States are encouraged to increase investment flows towards climate actions that protect children from the adverse impacts of climate change, including climate resilient health, education and WASH services.
- 10.3 ASEAN member States are encouraged to enhance public awareness and empower children and adolescents with the necessary knowledge and mechanisms to contribute to the design and implementation of child-sensitive climate change actions at local, national and regional levels.
- 10.4 ASEAN member States are encouraged to ensure that systems and social services are resilient to various shocks and stresses and are designed to support the most vulnerable and exposed children in times of crises (such as natural hazards, severe economic downturns or social tensions) by integrating child-specific rights into national disaster management laws and policies.





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